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Docket No. F-7889

Ser. No. 10/616,324

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please replace the claims with the claims provided in the listing below wherein status, amendments, additions and cancellations are indicated.

1. (Currently Amended) An image forming system, comprising:

a computer, a first image forming apparatus capable of performing only monochrome printing, and a second image forming apparatus capable of performing color printing, which are connected with each other via a network,

wherein:

said computer has:

(a) a page-number appending configuration for appending page numbers onto job data,

(b) a job-data dividing configuration for dividing said job data into monochromatic print data and color print data,

(c) a job-data allocating configuration for allocating said monochromatic print job data and color print job data divided through said job-data dividing configuration, respectively, to said first image forming apparatus and said second image forming apparatus, and

(d) a data-transmitting/receiving configuration for transmitting said monochromatic print job data to said first image

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forming apparatus via said network, and transmitting said color print job data to said second image forming apparatus via said network in response to reception of a job-process-continuation signal from said second image forming apparatus after receiving a job-completion signal from said first image forming apparatus,

said first image forming apparatus includes:

(a) first image formation means for forming a monochrome image on each of first recording materials in accordance with said monochromatic print job data transmitted from said computer,

(b) job-completion detection means for detecting completion of said monochromatic print job and then outputting said job-completion signal to said computer in response thereto, and

(c) first communication means for allowing data communication with said computer via said network,

said second image forming apparatus includes:

(a) second image formation means for forming a color image on each of second recording materials in order of page

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number in accordance with said color print job data transmitted from said computer,

(b) recording-material feed means for feeding said second recording materials to said second image formation means,

(c) a post-processing device having a post-processing section with a post-processing tray, and a first discharge section, wherein:

said post-processing section is adapted to guide said second recording materials fed from said recording-material feed means and color-printed by said second image formation means, to said post-processing tray, so as to subject said second recording materials on said post-processing tray to a post-processing and then discharge said second recording materials from said post-processing tray onto a recording-material discharge tray, and

said first discharge section is adapted to discharge said second recording materials fed from said recording-material feed means and color-printed by said second image formation means, directly onto said recording-material discharge tray,

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(d) job-process-continuation-signal input means for entering said job-process-continuation signal there through, wherein said job-process-continuation-signal input means ~~is adapted to allow~~ outputs said job-process-continuation signal to ~~be output to~~ said computer only after said first recording materials with monochrome images formed by said first image forming apparatus are set on said post-processing tray of said post-processing device,

(e) second communication means for allowing data communication with said computer via said network, and

(f) image-formation control means for controlling respective operations of said second image formation means, said recording-material feed means, said post-processing device, said job-process-continuation-signal input means and said second communication means, and

said image-formation control means has:

(1) a configuration for switching an operation of said post-processing device in such a manner that in response to said job-process-continuation signal entered from said job-process-continuation-signal input means, said second recording materials color-printed by said second image formation means are

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discharged directly onto said recording-material discharge tray through said first discharge section, and said post-processing section ~~serving~~ serves as a second discharge section to discharge said first recording materials set on said post-processing tray, onto said recording-material discharge tray without subjecting said first recording materials set on said post-processing tray to said post-processing, and

(2) a recording-material mixing configuration for checking said page numbers of said color print job data transmitted from said computer, and switching respective operations of said recording-material feed means and said post-processing means to [[allow]] effect mixing and discharge of color pages of said second recording material and monochrome pages of said first recording materials ~~to be mixed~~ together on said recording-material discharge tray while serializing the page numbers thereof in sequential order.

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2. (Currently Amended) An image forming system comprising:

a plurality of image forming apparatuses and a computer, which are connected with each other via a network, each of said image forming apparatuses being adapted to be operated in accordance with job data from said computer, wherein:

said computer has:

(a) a page-number appending configuration for appending page numbers onto said job data,

(b) a job-data dividing configuration for dividing said job data in accordance with a given dividing rule,

(c) a job-data allocating configuration for allocating plural job data divided through said job-data dividing function, respectively, to specified image forming apparatuses, and

(d) a data-transmitting/receiving configuration for transmitting said plural job data allocated through said job-data allocating function, to said corresponding image forming apparatuses via said network,

at least one of said image forming apparatuses includes:

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(a) image formation means for forming an image on each of first recording materials in order of page number in accordance with said job data transmitted from said computer,

(b) recording-material feed means for feeding said first recording materials to said image formation means,

(c) a post-processing device having a post-processing section with a post-processing tray, and a first discharge section, wherein:

said post-processing section is adapted to guide said first recording materials fed from said recording-material feed means and formed with images, to said post-processing tray, so as to subject said first recording materials on said post-processing tray to a post-processing and then discharge said first recording materials from said post-processing tray onto a recording-material discharge tray, and

said first discharge section is adapted to discharge said first recording materials fed from said recording-material feed means and formed with images, directly onto said recording-material discharge tray,

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(d) job-process-continuation-signal input means for entering a job-process-continuation-signal therethrough, wherein said job-process-continuation-signal input means ~~is adapted to allow~~ outputs said job-process-continuation signal ~~to be output~~ to said computer only after second recording materials with images formed by another one of said image forming apparatuses are set on said post-processing tray of said post-processing device,

(e) communication means for allowing data communication with said computer via said network, and

(f) image-formation control means for controlling respective operations of said image formation means, said recording-material feed means, said post-processing device, said job-process-continuation-signal input means and said communication means, and

said image-formation control means has:

(1) a configuration for switching an operation of said post-processing device in such a manner that in response to said job-process-continuation signal entered from said job-process-continuation-signal input means, said first recording materials with images formed by said image formation means are

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discharged directly onto said recording-material discharge tray through said first discharge section, and said post-processing section serves as a second discharge section to discharge said second recording materials from said post-processing tray onto said recording-material discharge tray without subjecting said second recording materials set on said post-processing tray to said post-processing, and

(2) a recording-material mixing configuration for checking said page numbers of said job data transmitted from said computer, and switching said respective operations of said recording-material feed means and said post-processing device to [[allow]] effect mixing and discharge of said second recording materials with images formed by said another image forming apparatus and said first recording materials with images formed by said image formation means ~~to be mixed~~ together on said recording-material discharge tray while serializing the page numbers thereof in sequential order.

3-20. (Cancelled)